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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE, S/CPR

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SUBJECT: CYPRUS: PRESIDENT REPLIES TO AMBASSADOR'S
PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS

¶1. (U) U.S. Ambassador Frank C. Urbancic on September 9 presented his credentials to Republic of Cyprus President Demetris Christofias. Later that day, President Christofias's office sent a formal, written reply to the Ambassador's statement from the presentation of credentials ceremony. The text of the reply follows, and the original will be pouched to the Department (EUR/SE).

¶2. (SBU) "It is with distinct pleasure that I receive today the Letters of Credence, appointing you as the new Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Cyprus. I am certain that your tenure of office will contribute to the further strengthening and enhancement of the already excellent bilateral relations between our countries.

Excellency, allow me to assure that my Government will work in close cooperation with you, so that your tenure will be highly constructive and fruitful, in such a way that the strong, long-lasting relationship that Cyprus enjoys with the USA will become even closer.

Cyprus being the easternmost corner of the European Union, a bridge between Europe and the Middle East, it is very well placed to make valuable contributions in addressing regional and global challenges.

In this respect, I wish to underline that Cyprus, working with many other nations including the United States, has successfully assumed an important humanitarian role, exemplified by the evacuation of so many American citizens from Lebanon, during the last crisis. We underscore Cyprus's cooperation with the United States on important issues of money laundering and human trafficking.

Specific mention should be made to the Proliferation Security Initiative Ship Boarding Agreement, signed in 2005, following the U.S. Proliferation Initiative; Cyprus became the first EU Member state to have such an Agreement with the United States.

Excellency,

When I assumed the Presidency of the Republic of Cyprus I declared that the primary target of the Government would be the achieving of a solution to the Cyprus problem in order to give to the future generations the opportunity to live in a peaceful and reunited homeland. Towards this end, we took bold initiatives in order to put an end to the stalemate of the last few years. These initiatives have already led to tangible results.

The 3rd of September 2008 marks the official launch of full-fledged negotiations. I take this opportunity to reiterate that I am determined to spare no effort to create conditions conducive to reaching a settlement and I stand

ready to tackle possible obstacles that lie ahead with the necessary goodwill. At the same time, we expect a new conciliatory spirit from all interested parties and that everybody will respect our independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

A solution is only achievable within the framework of a bizonal, bicomunal federation, as envisaged by the 1977 and 1979 High Level Agreements, with political equality as described in the relevant Security Council Resolutions, with a single sovereignty, citizenship and international personality.

I am fully aware, Your Excellency, that the negotiating process will not be an easy affair. Nevertheless, I remain optimistic that through these negotiations it will be possible to reach an agreed solution. It is also of utmost importance to safeguard the basic principles which have accompanied us so far in this process, namely to reach an agreed solution under the Good Offices mission of the Secretary General of the United Nations without arbitration or artificial timetables. Every effort should be made by the international community to allow the Cypriots to retain ownership of the process and to achieve an outcome which will be approved by the people in separate simultaneous referenda. This should be a Cypriot solution by the Cypriots and for the Cypriots.

In parallel, given that Turkey is engaged in accession negotiations with the European Union, we expect that the Union will exert its influence, so that Turkey fulfills its obligations towards the Republic of Cyprus, especially as regards Turkey's obligation to accept and implement a

solution to the Cyprus problem in line with the principles upon which the Union is founded.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express our gratitude for the interest that the United States demonstrates with regard to the ongoing process and we expect that it will exert all its influence towards Turkey so that this new initiative will lead to a lasting settlement on the basis of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and in accordance with the principles of international law.

Excellency, in welcoming you to Cyprus, I would kindly request that you convey to President George Walker Bush, the Government and the people of the United States our warmest greetings and a message of close friendship and solidarity. Finally, Mr. Ambassador, I extend to you my heartfelt wishes for every success in your high duties that lie ahead. I conclude by assuring you once more of the firm support of my Government and me personally in your valuable mission in my country."

End text
Urbancic